

Provider Chronicles

Commander's Corner

Dear Providers,

I sincerely appreciate the tremendous efforts from each and every one of you during our long march South and assuming the support mission in this area from the 228th FSB. To your credit, we accomplished all of this while not allowing our level of support to slip for the Ready First in Ramadi, the Dukes in Tall Afar and the Spartans in Hit.

While settling in our new sites on Forward Operating Base (FOB) RAMADI and FOB TAQAD-DAM, we have had some

significant changes in the Provider family. On June 16th in the Alamo on FOB RAMADI, we bid a fond farewell to CSM Mortenson and his wife Barbara and warmly welcomed aboard CSM Harvey, his wife Linda and their four children. Aufwiedersehen CSM Mortenson and Grüssgott CSM Harvey. We also said goodbye to Bravo Battery (the Bloodhounds) under CPT Kaplachinski and 1SG Woods, but we were able to keep a small slice led by 1LT Byrne and SFC Perez. We also received a large number of soldiers from the 47th FSB under the command of CPT Brian Cozine and 1SG Alvarez who are here to reinforce our logistical and medical capabilities in Ramadi. Welcome them and share your experi-

ences from the last six months to make them part of the team, as well as our new arrivals from Friedberg.

On the home front, our spouses participated in the Ready Combat Team's Combat Spouse Badge competition, which gave all of our spouses a glimpse into the soldier skills that we take for granted: APFT, marksmanship, litter carrying, Thank the rear detachment personnel the next time you see or talk to them for all of their efforts.

It is not too early to think about your career plans and goals after this deployment. Look at yourself and look at your soldiers, we have future Sergeant Majors, Warrant Officers and Officers in our ranks take the time to mentor and encourage them to step forward and accept the challenge; we are growing the Army's future leaders right here, right now.



Sergeant Major's Corner

Hello Providers, I just wanted to take this time to tell you how proud I am of all your accomplishments and to congratulate you for your superb work. Your efforts during this phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom have been instrumental to the many successes of the Ready First Combat Team as we continue our battle against the Global War On Terrorism.

Being deployed is a difficult thing but knowing that we have an excellent Family Readiness Group with outstanding leader-

ship eases the pains amongst us all. I am very proud of the great job the Rear Detachment is doing and I thank them for embracing my wife Linda and I upon our arrival in the battalion.

It's truly a blessing to be amongst our nation's finest; in all actuality, it's an honor, pleasure and a privilege to be your Command Sergeant Major. I promise that I'll do my best to represent all of you.

I haven't had the time

just to see everybody yet; however, over the next few months I hope to see everyone. It's harder for me to remember all you than it is for you to remember me, but over time everybody will be tattooed in my mind.

In the next issue of the Provider Chronicles I'll be addressing Military Customs and Courtesies to be followed by Army Values and the Soldier and NCO Creeds; until then, keep providing.



JUNE 2006

Fellow Providers, we are at the halfway point in our deployment, so I ask each of you to continue with the standards and discipline that have kept us safe and healthy up to this point. Remember that 1/3 of all fatalities in Iraq are due to accidents - accidents are preventable. Finally, take a look at your areas and do your best to leave them better than you found them.



The HQ6 Crew: Gunner, SPC Scheller; TC, LTC Schröter; Driver, SPC Taffner



Rhinos: Out To Stomp!

Hello to all the Rhino families! It's been a long while since LT Patton wrote the last message for me in the Provider Chronicles. A lot has happened since the last message. As you all should know by now, we are no longer at FOB Sykes in Tall 'Afar. We did have to leave SSG Jabil back in Tall 'Afar to work with the 2/37 Armor Battalion. HHC is now operating on two different bases: al Taqqadum, which is near Habbaniyah and Camp Ramadi, outside the city of Ramadi.

All HHC Soldiers worked like crazy in preparation for the move. We had to shut down operations and pack all our personal and office items into containers. Then, most of us had to convoy down here although some lucky Rhinos did get to fly in. The convoy lasted three to four nights as we drove from northern Iraq to the center of Iraq. We had rest stops in Camp Speicher, which is right outside of Tikrit, and Taji, which is just north of Baghdad.

Once on the ground at our new areas, there was no rest for the weary. We had to learn the area, set up our new offices and some of us had to learn new jobs.

The composition of HHC changed a lot after we left Tall 'Afar. HHC no longer runs a detention facility for the bad guys. Our platoon from Service Battery 2-3 FA and the Soldiers from A Co and B Co had to leave us and rejoin their respective companies. I had a formation with the Detention Facility guys to say thanks for all their help. I didn't make much sense but 1SG Hetzler got up and spoke eloquently. Thanks to people like SPC

Urrea, PFC Taylor, SPC McDonald, SPC Mullins (Dragon 6) and SPC Schroeder (sounds like Schröter, but he's easier to work with), the detention facility closed having processed over 300 detainees. Thank you to everyone that worked there.

We now run two Mayor Cells: one at each base. SFC Sinclair holds down the Mayor Cell in Ramadi while SFC Kupec, SGT Hall and SPC Canfield are breaking some stuff, fixing

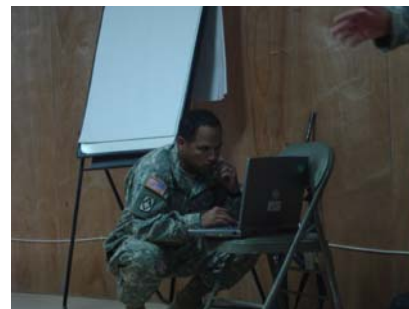


other stuff and making new stuff in TQ.

We also are responsible for the battalion medical aid station at TQ. SSG Belton and SGT Jones from the 47th Forward Support joined SGT Abraham and SPC Dunn from C Co to help run it.

We got our cooks back! After a stay with A Co working in the CL I Yard at FOB Sykes, the cooks are again Rhinos and working long hours at the dining facility on TQ. SSG Doss rejoined the deployed Rhinos and received a lot of hugs. SGT Guest, SPC Pendleton, PFC Hernandez and all the cooks are doing an amazing job in making not so good food at TQ taste almost as good as the food in Ramadi.

Chief Kirsch had Christmas in June when he found out that the bat-



talion mechanics at TQ would work directly for him. Guys like SPC Mock, SPC Yazzie and SPC Miller now turn wrenches with the Chief.

We also now have a platoon of Soldiers from B/2-3 FA to provide security to all our convoys. 1LT Byrne (married to the 1LT Byrne in C Co) is the platoon leader. Guys like SSG Harris, SGT Hawkins and SPC Hadley work hard out on the roads to make sure supplies get out to our Infantry and Armor brothers safely.

Of course, all the Rhinos that have stayed Rhinos throughout the deployment are still doing great things. I can't put into words how honored I am to work with these great Soldiers who perform amazingly under pressure. SPC Guzman's still running the 4 shop with some help from CPT Buckler and SFC Smith. SPC Brooks, SFC McSwain, MAJ Eldred, SFC Phipps, SFC Modeste and all of the SPO shop still manage somehow to remain psychic and predict what Battalion will need what class of supply when and figure out how to get it there with little to no vehicles.

Well, I guess I'll stop there. I think I may be taking up too much space by mentioning names. I didn't mention all of them but I'll get to them next month. By the way, if you see the Hetzler family, congratulate Keif on graduating from High School. I know the 1SG is proud. I can't wait to hear the stories when he gets back from leave. Until next, I hope everyone the best back in Germany and the States. On behalf of all of us, we'll see you soon.

CPT Jimmy LaCaria
Rhino 6



SPC Knotts and SGT Matt have the sound system up for the change of responsibility ceremony.



CPT LaCaria prepares to conduct Values and Ethics training

Alpha Company: Gators!



Left: SFC Jordan helps set up the banner sent by the FRG in the A CO Command Post.



Right: SGT Tudo and SPC Salfiti holds down the SSA with the help of the civilian professionals from Blackhawk

Greetings to all the family members and friends of the Alpha Company Gators! Over the past month many changes have occurred for our unit in Iraq. It's amazing how these soldiers made so many great things happen in such little time. First the company departed FOB Sykes, where we dedicated so much time and effort into transforming a substandard work environment, into a remarkable work environment that exceeded high expectations. In preparation for the move, the soldiers packed their personal equipment, prepared the massive equipment that the company owned for movement, and cleared out our areas thoroughly, to give the appearance that "no one had ever occupied the grounds". The Company then executed a 3 day tactical convoy to our new location approximately 18 miles east of Ramadi, in Taqaddum (TQ). Since the unit that we replaced was due to redeploy shortly

upon our arrival, our soldiers "hit the ground running", in order to grant them ample time to prepare for redeployment. Our soldiers now run an SSA that is twice as large and demanding as the one in FOB Sykes. Our III/V Platoon and other soldiers in the unit also continue to demonstrate true professionalism in the numerous convoys that they conduct. The area is more challenging, and the soldiers continue to train and execute with distinction. I am overwhelmed with pride because of the hard work that our soldiers have done up to this point. I am even prouder of the positive attitude that they maintain in such a demanding period. Our soldiers continue to strive for excellence, as we transform another area by giving it "the Gator Touch".

To the FRG- you continue to lead the way in the home-front. I was extremely pleased to see and hear about the spouses that participated in training

and received the Combat Spouses Badge. I would also like to thank our incredible FRG for the banner that we received. It was very special because of the personal messages and items that were attached. It now hangs on the wall of our Command Post to continuously remind our troops of our precious loved ones that are awaiting our return. You have no idea how much stronger your caring words and deeds make us. God bless! We'll see you in no time.



SSG Moore takes care of business in the SSA with the 6K forklift

Soldiers show appreciation for Local National workers in the Class I yard and SSA during an awards ceremony at FOB Sykes



Greetings From the Assassins!

My name is CPT Brian Cozine, the company commander of A Co 47th FSB and the Forward Logistics Element here to support the Ready First Combat Team. Our 1SG is Vic Alvarez and we are here to provide outstanding support to the team. We have just recently relocated from camp Buehring, Kuwait to Camp Ramadi.

Our Battalion is part of the 2d BCT located in sunny Baumholder, Germany. Our integration into the 501st Providers team has gone extremely well and we are pleased to be part of the team. Currently we have Soldiers assigned to the Gators, Blacksmiths and Cobras.

So far we have spent the last 6

months in Kuwait training our Soldiers on Combat Logistic Patrols, weapons qualifications, and many other areas to be ready for operations in Iraq. We are ready to assist in operations in Iraq as Providers!

Thank you for welcoming us as part of your team. Providers!



SPC Forcadilla, (A Co 47th FSB) conducting security during a night Combat Logistic Patrol.



SGT Bess, PFC McCormick (B Co 501st), and PFC Rivers (A Co 47th) bring much needed ice to the motorpool.

Charlie Company: A Change of Environment

Greetings Cobra Families! It has been a very busy month for the Cobra team. However, we are achieving new standards as we approach each day. We have conducted two Reliefs in Place (RIP) at FOB Sykes with Headquarters Company, 423 Infantry Medical Platoon and at Camp Ramadi with Charlie Company, 228th FSB. We have traveled over 364 miles to get to our new location without any vehicle breakdowns or injuries. Prior to Charlie Company, 501st FSB departing FOB Sykes, we sent three soldiers in advance to integrate with the outgoing unit and to serve as a reception party for new arriving personnel entering Camp Ramadi.

1LT Jones, SGT Asuncion, and



SPC Alirad worked diligently with C/228 FSB to learn their Tactical Training Procedures (TTP) and overall patient flow for the medical treatment facility. We have embarked upon history as the Cobra team progresses with supporting the Ready First Combat Team here in Ar Ramadi. Our soldiers have outperformed in many areas. Their dedication to duty and their perseverance allows Charlie Company to focus on providing the best medical care to each maneuver battalion.

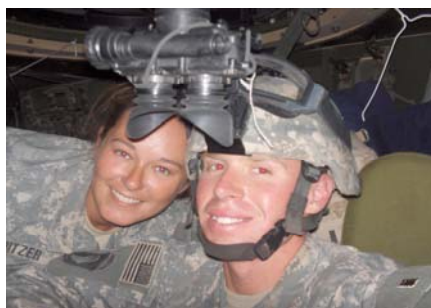
We have the support of the Navy's Surgical Shock Trauma Platoon (SSTP) which gives our medical facility the capability to perform resuscitative surgery which eliminates the time of evacuation to a Combat Support Hospital (CSH). The ability to integrate and assist the SSTP allows our Navy, Marines, and Army personnel to work to-

gether in a joint venture instead of separate entities. Our medics and corpsmen are receiving intense medical lectures that focus on the areas of Trauma that will be seen in the operating and trauma room. The quality training our medics and ancillary areas are receiving will keep them ready for any medical case that comes into C/MED.

Lastly, I want to thank C/47th FSB from Baumholder, Germany who augmented us with 18 personnel from Kuwait to help Charlie Company, 501st FSB provide support to RFCT in Ar Ramadi. Lastly, I know the "Cobra Soldiers" are motivated, trained, and ready for current and future operations that are required of them because we are "IRON SOLDIERS".



SGT Goss and SPC Morehead enforce the speed limit



SGT Bitzer and SPC Hill are all smiles before their convoy

Bravo Company: Blacksmiths!



Left: SGT Aguleara performs services on the company's supply of Night Vision Devices

Right: The Team from Service and Recovery with their Baby- A Mad Max Fork Lift



PFC Ricci assists in putting a "Pope's Chair" on a 1114 truck.



Greetings Blacksmith Families!

We safely made the 320 mile trip from FOB Sykes to Camp Ramadi, Iraq! We continue to settle into our new locations and make daily improvements to our area. While the vast majority of the company is now located at Camp Ramadi, two of our MSTs are conducting maintenance operations outside of our sector; TF 2-37 MST (Tal A'Far) and TF 1-36 MST (Hit). The First Sergeant and I are making trips to every location where Blacksmiths are living and working, ensuring they are settling into their routines.

We transitioned with the 779th Maintenance Company several weeks ago and are now in complete control of DS Maintenance in the Al Ambar Province. Every shop in the company has been doing great work since we arrived at Camp Ramadi. Supply is busy tracking five different property books – a very difficult task. Motorpool keeps the company fleet rolling out the gate and

did a great job with a successful convoy from Tal A'Far to Ramadi with no major maintenance issues. S&R has been upgrading the brigade's gun trucks with ballistic glass, constructing gates for outposts, and constructing gun mounts for the Iraqi Police. ENG is hard at work keeping all of the generation and air conditioners running; keeping soldiers cool in the 120 degree summer. ELM is always working hard to keep the fighters talking while Armament keeps the guns shooting. Missile stays very busy with all of the Basic Sight Assemblies and missile systems on the Bradley's and Automotive fixes everything to keep the thousands of rolling vehicles on the roads of Ramadi. Shop Office ties it all together and manages every job completed by the company. We are currently supporting Army, Navy, Marines and Special Forces. We do it all. As MSG Meister says, "If we can't fix it – it ain't broke."

I can't tell you how proud I am of all of

your Blacksmiths. They are answering the call of service in our Nation's hour of need. Today they take their rightful place among the heroes of our Nation's history. They are selfless, tireless, and unrelenting in the face of danger, and they continuously bring honor to the uniform. Our country is proud of them, and I am proud to be the Commander of the finest DS Maintenance Company in the Army.

To all of the little blacksmiths – know that mom and dad are doing great work out here in the desert. They are ALWAYS thinking about you and praying for your safety and wellbeing. Continue to mind the grown-ups around you and enjoy your summer. We love you all!

Blacksmith-6



SFC McChesney rules the Armorment Shop



1LT Owen prepares his convoy brief



SGT Wigal squares away a part

Provider Change of Responsibility Ceremony



ISG George acts as the Commander of Troops during the Ceremony



The Chaplain delivers the invocation to the Soldiers and the audience



The Official Party marches into position



The guidon is prepared to be passed by LTC Schröter



The guidon is relinquished by CSM Mortenson



The guidon is received by CSM Harvey from LTC Schröter



LTC Schröter speaks about transition in the Battalion



"This is not a goodbye," promises CSM Mortenson, "only a 'see you later' "



CSM Harvey addresses his Battalion for the first time